ISLE OF ARRAN

REV·CHARLES·A·HALL

BEAUTIFUL·BRITAIN

GORDON HOME

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The Isle of Arran

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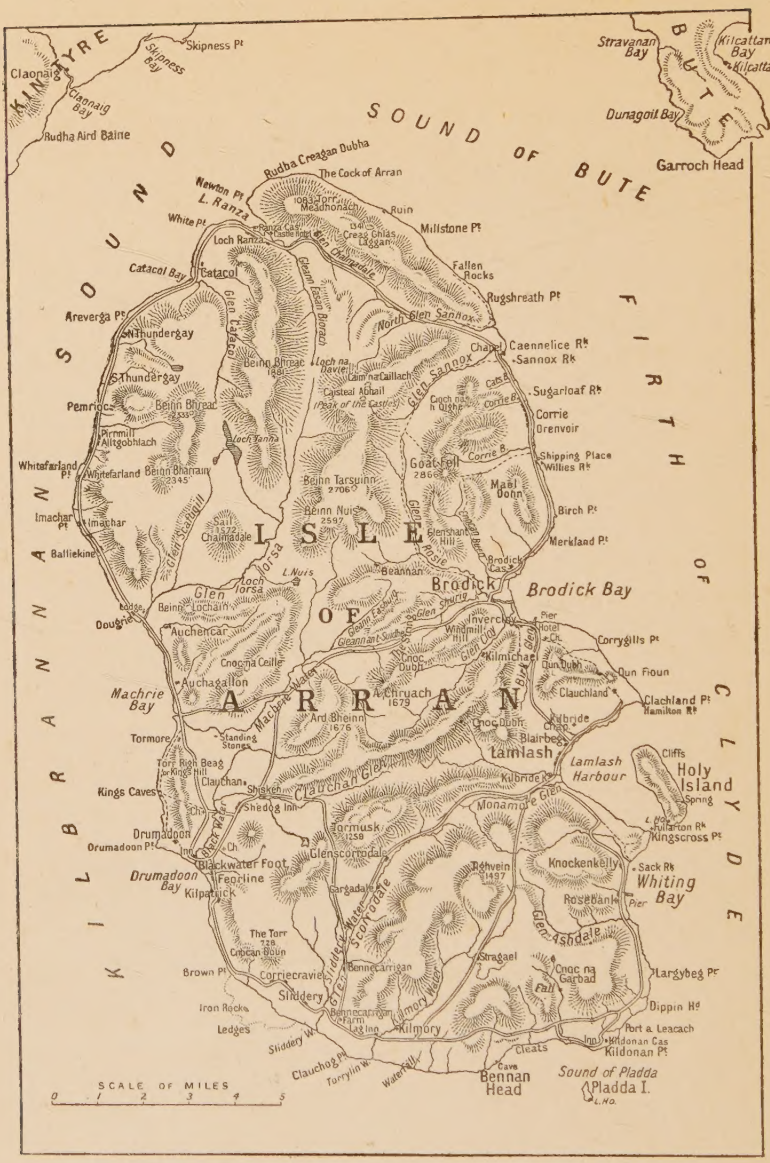

SKETCH-MAP OF THE ISLE OF ARRAN.

THE ISLAND OF ARRAN

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

STATELY and impressive, the Island of Arran rises from the broad estuary of the world-famed Clyde. Its rugged and incomparable outline cannot fail to impress even the least impressionable traveller as he sails up the splendid Firth, and as one beholds it from some vantage point on the mainland, silhouetted dark and grand against the westering sun, one imagines it to be clad in the mystery of an enchanted isle, and is moved with deep desire to set foot upon its shores. One who knows the island intimately and is under its spell can readily sympathize with that Arran devotee who, nearing the end of his earthly career, prayed, "Let me die with my face towards Arran."

From whatever view-point it is beheld, the sight of Arran invariably constitutes an inspiration. Let it be seen from the Renfrewshire heights, the Ayrshire coast resorts, the deck of a Clyde steamer, its spell must needs be felt; or

taking a stand at a near point in the Island of Bute from whence on good days Arran may be seen in some detail, but never twice in the same mood, he must indeed be callous who does not experience a thrill.

Taking steamer from the Ayrshire port, Ardrossan, for Brodick on a hazy September morning, Arran is in complete obscurity, but as the vessel ploughs its way across the channel and rapidly nears the Arran coast, the island's outline becomes gradually more and more distinct to the observer. At first it appears ghostly and impalpable, a creature of the mist, something unreal, phantasmal: slowly, however, the impalpable becomes palpable, the creature of the mist proves itself to be solidly real, and the sea-girt land, clad in greys, purple, russet, and green, with its rugged granite peaks, its noble glens, its cadent burns, and comfortable-looking whitewashed cottages, breaks into view. Fortunate is the traveller, visiting the Clyde for the first time, who sees Arran thus grow upon his vision. More fortunate still if he sees the September mist rise like a curtain, gradually disclosing the grandeur of the island; rolling itself up until it attains an elevation of some 1,500 or 2,000 feet, the mist quickly resolves itself into fleecy clouds,

which hover over the peaks and produce atmospheric effects which baffle description.

But it is venturesome to attempt to describe the general appearance of Arran on a first approach. The reader might expect to see the conditions pictured and be disappointed. Perhaps one reason why so many thousands of visitors are attracted to the island every year is that it is so variable in its moods—one day clad in mist; another bathed in sunshine; now gloomy and threatening; to-day warm and grateful; to-morrow gale-swept, with the erstwhile trickling burns so swollen by torrential rains that they rush thunderingly, carrying boulders and debris in hurrying, scurrying haste to the sea.

Arran has been aptly termed "The Little Switzerland" of the Clyde. Scotland may produce majestic scenery on a larger scale, but it surely cannot provide anything choicer than the Alpine dignity of this island. In elevation the Arran peaks cannot vie with the Alps, but they are grand in outline, and are worthy of the mettle of the mountaineer. And where could nobler glens be found than Arran has in Iorsa, Rosa, and Sannox?

The geological features of Arran are so unique as to attract geologists from all parts of the world. The island is reputed to epitomize the geological

history of both the Highlands and the Lowlands; this is true to a considerable extent, although not entirely. But never in such small space could be gathered together a greater variety of geological features. There are the folded, contorted, Highland schists, the strata of Old Red Sandstone, Carboniferous and Triassic Ages, and evidence of the Chalk and Lower Lias. Evidences of past volcanic action are abundant everywhere. The Glacial Epoch has left its marks in all directions, betraying itself by perched blocks, erratic boulders, ice-worn rock surfaces, moraines, and traces of glacial lakes. And an island subject to so heavy a rainfall, so well watered by its numerous streams, must needs display to a marked degree the geological phenomena caused by running water. Raised sea-beaches, indicating periods of land upheaval, may be traced in many parts of the island; caves formed by the action of the salt sea waves in ancient cliffs are to be seen in several places now quite beyond the reach of the sea. These caves have provided natural shelter for primitive man as well as modern whelk-gatherers and travelling tinkers or gypsies. One of these caves, as we shall see, is reputed to have sheltered royalty in the person of Robert the Bruce.

Arran is also a happy hunting-ground for the

AN ARRAN BURN.

Burns are numerous in Arran and add great charm to the scenery. During heavy rains, a gentle rill becomes a turbulent stream.

field naturalist. It possesses a rich flora and a fauna worthy of itself. In a single month (August) the writer has noted upwards of three hundred flowering plants, including some alpines, and a profusion of mosses, ferns, liverworts and seaweeds. Ninety species of birds were observed in the same month. The marine zoologist finds ample scope for study in rock-pools, and is well rewarded by dredging off shore. Insect life is abundant. The angler finds good sport in the sea and by the burn, and is delighted to find that most of the streams may be fished freely, without let or hindrance. If there is poverty anywhere it is in mammalian life. The fox has been exterminated, the mole, squirrel, and weasel are unknown, and some of the small mammals are rare or absent. Rabbits abound, the hare is not uncommon, and red deer roam the northern parts of the island in considerable numbers. The sportsman finds plenty of use for his gun. It is interesting to know that the golden eagle, which was said to have deserted the island, now nests there, and that the raven is also an Arran bird, although uncommon.

As will be seen, Arran has its place in history and romance, nor is it destitute of prehistoric memorials.

Introductory

This fair and attractive isle is twenty miles in its greatest length—from the Cock of Arran to Bennan Head—and about ten miles in breadth. In shape it has been compared to a sack of potatoes tied about the middle! The circuit of the island may be made by a good road, totalling about fifty-six miles. Some strenuous walkers attempt the circuit in a single day, but it is best negotiated in three days, thus allowing ample time for observation. There are two roads which cross the island, one called the "String," from Brodick, which, near the western side, branches in a north-westerly direction to Machrie and south-westerly to Blackwaterfoot; the other yclept the "Ross," leading from Lamlash, and bearing in a south-westerly direction to Sliddery. The former road rises at one point to 768 feet, and the latter to 974 feet. The lover of romantic scenery finds much to inspire him in traversing these two roads. But to realize the beauties of Arran one must climb its hills, walk up its glens, follow its streams, explore its woodlands, and generally avoid the beaten track, which, fine as it is, seems tame in comparison with the grander glories. The highest point of Arran is Goatfell, which rises to 2,866 feet, but other peaks make a near approach to that elevation. The Holy

Island, about a mile and three quarters in length and over half a mile in breadth, rises out of Lamlash Bay on the east to a height of 1,030 feet, and to the south there is a small island, the Isle of Pladda. The sea journey from Ardrossan to Brodick is thirteen miles. From Garroch Head, on the south of Bute, Arran is distant six miles. On the west, where Arran is divided from Kintyre by the Kilbrannan Sound, the distance across the Sound is about three miles. Visitors to the island make a comfortable sea passage in palatial steamers to Brodick, Lamlash, King's Cross, and Whiting Bay from Ardrossan; and to Lochranza, Pirnmill, and Machrie Bay by pleasure steamers plying between Wemyss Bay, or Fairlie, and Campbelltown, in Kintyre. A river steamer makes a tour through the famed Kyles of Bute, calling at Corrie and other Arran ports. There are no railways or tramcars in the island, communications between the various villages and clachans being maintained by steamer or horse conveyances. The main roads are good, but in many places hilly, so much so as to compel the cyclist to dismount, or the driver to lighten his horses' burden by alighting and walking up the steeper hills. There is a moiety of truth in the saying that in Arran "a drive is a walk."

CHAPTER II

PREHISTORIC ARRAN

ARRAN is peculiarly rich in memorials of prehistoric times; the observant tourist must needs notice the numerous cairns, cists, stone circles, monoliths, ancient forts, and other evidences of a remote age, when the culture of the inhabitants was vastly different from the civilization of today. Seeing these memorials he will naturally ponder them and try to picture their builders, speculating not a little concerning their beliefs and mode of life.

The man of the Old Stone Age, called Palæolithic, who, furnished with the crudest of stone weapons, made his way from the Continent to South Britain at the close of the Glacial Epoch—hunting the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and other game, and pushing northwards at the edge of the gradually retreating ice—does not seem to have reached Scotland or the Scottish Isles. At any rate, if he did he has not left a trace behind him to indicate his occupation. While it is assumed by the leading authorities that the Scottish mainland and isles were once

occupied by an early race of neolithic people of similar culture to those connected with the Danish Kitchen Middens, the earliest race of whom we have distinct evidence were of later neolithic culture—people of later date in the New or Polished Stone Age. They had not discovered the uses of metals; all their weapons of war and implements of peace were fashioned of polished stone, or material other than metal. Yet their culture was a great advance upon that of the Old Stone Age. It is commonly assumed that this neolithic people were Iberians, who, originating in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean, drifted conqueringly by the coast route via the north-west of France to Britain: one stream following the English Channel to the Baltic, a second reaching Ireland and proceeding up the St. George's Channel, ultimately spreading over the Hebrides and the Orkneys, colonizing as they progressed. The track of the Iberian immigrants can be traced by the long barrows and chambered cairns in which they buried their dead; the implements discovered in these cemeteries indicate their culture, and the human remains betray their appearance. They were short in stature; they possessed long heads, with high, narrow faces, and foreheads betraying con-

siderable brain capacity. It is assumed that they had dark eyes and hair, and a complexion of the brunette type.

Such were the people who at a remote time reached Arran and established themselves there. How they were received by any earlier occupants, or on what terms, or by what means they colonized the island, must be left to the imagination. All that we know of them has been learned from their barrows and cairns. There is every reason to believe that these Iberian immigrants were the builders of the chambered cairns which are so numerous, particularly in the south of Arran, and which are unquestionably the oldest memorials of human occupancy.

The chambered cairns, the sepulchral remains of those ancient islanders, have been carefully explored. In them have been found flint knives, scrapers and arrowheads, a polished stone axe and hammer, and some primitive pottery. In some instances the bodies were inhumed, in others they were cremated. Bones of the pig, sheep, and ox found at the sites of the cairns show that this people had domesticated animals, and possibly held high festival at their expense as part of their funeral ceremonies. Possibly they furnished their dead with food and weapons in the fond

expectation that they would be serviceable to them in the ghostly happy hunting-ground at the back of Beyond!

These cairns, which are invariably nearly twice as long as broad, may be seen at East Bennan, where the site is spoken of as the Giant's Graves, at Torlin, Sliddery, Tormore, Dippen, Monamor, and in other situations. A full description of them all is to be found in "The Book of Arran: Archæology," edited by J. A. Balfour, F.S.A. Scot., etc. M'Arthur, in his "Antiquities of Arran," relates a curious story, told of a modern Goth who ventured to rifle the cairn at Torlin. It is alleged that he strewed the contents over his field, presumably for manure, and that "with daring irreverence, he selected one of the largest skulls from the ghastly heap, and carried it home; but scarcely had he entered his house when its walls were shaken as if struck by a tornado. Again and again the avenging blast swept over his dwelling, though not a sigh of the gentlest breeze was heard in the neighbouring wood. The affrighted victim hastened to re-bury the bones in their desecrated grave, but day and night shadowy phantoms continued to haunt his mind and track his steps; and a few months after the commission

of his rash deed, whilst riding along the high road towards Lag, he was thrown from his horse over a steep embankment, and dashed against the rocks of the stream beneath."

It seems that the Iberian people were not allowed to remain in undisputed possession of Arran; they had to suffer invasion by a race of a different type, similar in stature, dark in complexion, but relatively round-headed. These invaders seem to have come across the Continent and the North Sea. Evidences of their occupation are most numerous in the east of Scotland, but they established outposts in the west and reached Arran, where, in course of time, they may have blended with the Iberian stock. Their presence in the island is betrayed by their short cist interments, which differed materially from those in the chambered cairns, already referred to. These round-heads used stone implements, but they knew the use of bronze, and their superior metal weapons may have been a considerable factor in their invading progress.

The short cists built by these invaders were formed by four slabs of stone of such a size as to form an enclosed space, averaging about three feet in length and two feet in depth and breadth. They were unfloored, but invariably closed at the

A HAUNT OF THE RED DEER.

Wild Deer roam the hills of the northern half of the Island in considerable numbers.

top with a heavy stone slab. In these cists bodies were inhumed, being so disposed as to be contained in so small an enclosure. The departed seem to have been furnished with food in a special type of clay urn, and provided with weapons, and even ornaments, for the after life. But cremated remains occur in some of the cists, and it would seem that cremation superseded inhumation, and that eventually even the cists were dispensed with, the cremated remains being buried in a cinerary urn.

These short cists are found in different associations. They occur in mounds such as that styled Ossian's Mound at Clachaig farm, the traditional grave of the poet; in cairns, of which there is an example at Brown Head by the roadside; amidst circles of standing stones, of which there is a remarkable group on Machrie Moor; and they sometimes occur in the absence of any surface structure, as at Merkland. Stone circles are numerous in Arran, and would be more numerous still had not utilitarian crofters formerly used many of the big stones for gate-posts and in building their byres. The natives, and not a few visitors, associate the circles with the Druids, but the archæologist when asked, "what mean these stones?" will say that they are grave-stone

memorials of the short cist builders—a people who once invaded Arran, established themselves there, fought their fight, lived their lives, struggled, toiled, suffered and died, leaving no written history, but stone memorials, which have endured the stress of centuries, many of which, although slowly crumbling, still stand, making their appeal to our imagination and compelling us to speculate concerning a long-past age.

In addition to stone circles, there are many monoliths in Arran. Their significance has not been determined; they may be remains of stone circles and have some sepulchral association. Evidence, however, is awanting.

Other vestiges of primitive times appear in the forms of hut circles and hill-forts. Little can be said with any degree of certainty concerning either. The forts are probably of later date than the cairns and cists, and many have been used well into the historic period. Perhaps they were the islander's strongholds in times of Viking invasion.

A good example of these forts may be seen occupying a splendid site on an elevation in North Glen Sannox; it is called *Tòrr an t-Sean Chaisteil*, which interpreted means, "The Hill of the Old Fort." There is another in Gleneas-

dale, near Whiting Bay, one at King's Cross, one at Dippen, and one on the eminence of *Dùn Fioun* (literally, "The Fair Fort"). The latter occupies a commanding position above the sea at the end of the Clauchland Ridge. It is well worth a visit, not merely in the archæological interest, but as a magnificent view-point, from whence one may regard the Ayrshire and Bute coasts, the Holy Isle, and, to the north, the rugged Goatfell Range.

To one of these Arran forts occurring in Glen Cloy the name of "Bruce's Castle" has been given; this surely is a misnomer, for it is not a castle, and probably Bruce was never near it.

The forts at Corriecravie, on the south-west of the island, and at Drumadoon Point on the west, are interesting examples. That at Drumadoon is called "The Doon"; it occupies an excellent position, and is the largest structure of its kind in Arran. The headland which it surmounts is exceedingly impressive, consisting as it does of pentagonal porphyritic columns rising sheer from debris at the base to a height of nearly a hundred feet. Headrick, writing in 1807, speaks of the fort in these terms: "The ascent to this rock from the land is a deep inclined plane; and it is enclosed by a vast mound of loose stones, forming

a segment of a circle from the perpendicular cliff on one side to that on the other. It has a gateway in front, on each side of which are great heaps of stones, which seem to have been additional works for its defence. This mound includes several acres of land, in which are some ruins of houses of loose stone, and, were not its name entirely Gaelic, we might believe it to have been a fortress of the Danes." M'Arthur, writing in 1873, says: "The remains of a gateway may still be seen near the centre of the wall, which appears to have been the sole entrance to the fortress. . . . A great part of the ruins has been removed by the natives for the building of dykes, houses, and other purposes," and he quotes Martin as stating that the Doon was used as a *girth* or sanctuary, and "whatever number of men or cattle could get within it were secured from the assaults of enemies—the place being privileged by universal consent." Now the defending wall can just be traced, not more, and the gateway has been much plundered, although it is still recognizable. Of the houses mentioned by Headrick there is not a vestige. They may have been huts of the bee-hive form. It is annoying to the archæologist that such a structure should be so depleted; that so much should be

quarried in the space of a century. With the exception of the Sannox example, which is practically complete, all the Arran forts have been subjected to similar treatment, and such traces as remain give no adequate conception of their original appearance.

Vikings' graves, which belong to the historic period, but of which we have no documentary history, have been discovered on the south bank of the Blairmore Burn, Lamlash, and at King's Cross Point. At the last named place the grave was found so late as 1909, in the near vicinty of an ancient fort. The hardy Norseman had evidently been cremated in his boat after the custom of his people, and a mound erected over what was left of him and his possessions. In exploring the grave, some ship's bolts and other articles of iron were found, in addition to some articles of bronze and a bronze coin—a styca of Wigmund, Archbishop of York, A.D. 837-854.

Thus peering through the vista of the centuries, we find a long-headed race, the chambered cairn builders, who invaded Arran, which was presumably already occupied by a people of early neolithic culture. Later there was a further immigration of round-headed men, who came by way of the east and had weapons of bronze;

they were the builders of the short cists and erectors of the stone circles. Who dwelt in the hut circles or built the hill forts we cannot say, but the latter introduce us to the historic period, the coming of the Celts, the introduction of Christianity, and the incursions of the Scandinavian sea-rovers.

CHAPTER III

ARRAN IN HISTORIC TIMES

Little is known of the history of Arran in any period; the island figures in just a few outstanding events. Its actual history is left largely to the imagination. There must, however, have been some stirring incidents enacted within its borders and round its coasts.

Imagine the thrill which the islanders would experience when the Roman galleys made their way up the Firth to *Alcluyd* (Dunbarton). It is not unlikely that some of the vessels would pass within easy sight and give rise to not a little questioning and anxiety. Perhaps some may have found it convenient to take shelter within the splendid harbour of Lamlash Bay — a not uncommon anchorage for modern war-vessels. But the Roman invaders can hardly have landed in Arran; if any did there is no record to that effect, nor a single trace of their sojourn. Bent on a greater conquest, they simply observed and passed on, giving the name *Glotta Insula.*

The Scots, a Celtic people, made common cause with the Picts against the Romans. They

reached Scotland from Ireland, and in course of time established the kingdom of Dalraida. They grew in power, and ultimately the land came to be known by their name. In the fifth century A.D., Fergus, Angus, and Loarn, sons of Erc, came over from Dalraida, in Ireland, and colonized part of the west of Scotland. Each son formed a tribe, and the Cinel Gabran, under Fergus, held Kintyre, Knapdale, Bute, and Arran, with the small adjacent islands. Whether Fergus established himself by force of arms, or was allowed peaceful possession, we cannot say.

These colonists were Christian—at least, in name—and paved the way for the advent of Christian missionaries, who, in their early times, were content to occupy simple cells, natural caves, or form a monastery of an extremely simple character. The early Irish monasteries were fortified; the simple huts of wood or stone, circular in form, providing accommodation for the monks; the stronghold for protection of treasure and the crude church were enclosed by a strong wall. Such a settlement is known as a "cashel," and Mr. J. A. Balfour, in "The Book of Arran," describes the remains of an Irish-Celtic monastery, otherwise a cashel, situated in Arran, on the northern shoulder of Leaca Bhreac,

LOCHRANZA CASTLE AND KILBRANNAN SOUND.

It was probably at Lochranza that Robert the Bruce landed with his followers after exile in Rathlin.

in the vicinity of the clachan of Kilpatrick, on the west of the island, overlooking the Valley of Shisken and the Kilbrannan Sound. It is probable that this settlement was established by St. Brendan in the sixth century, and that the Sound it overlooks took its name from it.

In course of time the bold and ruthless Vikings, outlawed from their land by kings who desired order, sailed abroad on daring adventures, their raven-pennon'd galleys ploughing many seas, and their reckless manners striking terror on many a coast.

"O'er the sun's mirror green
Came the Norse coursers,
Trampling its glassy breadth
Into bright fragments.

"Hollow-back'd, huge-bosom'd;
Fraught with mail'd riders,
Clanging with hauberks,
Shield, spear, and battle-axe;
Canvas-wing'd; cable-rein'd
Steeds of the ocean."

Regner Lodbrog, a Viking chief, after harrying English coasts, attacked the islands south of Mull, including Arran, A.D. 855, and compelled the island men to join him in his adventures. Perhaps the Arran men came to enjoy the lawless life. Certainly the islanders under Lodbrog

became as terrible as their conquerors. They earned the name Skotar Vikings, or Gallgael—Gaelic pirates—and were guilty or many ruthless raids.

Harold Harfager, King of Norway, who had, in the ninth century, already possessed Shetland and Orkney, secured all the Western Isles and the Isle of Man. He made Sigurd the elder Jarl of Orkney, and, returning to Norway with many prizes, left him to govern his conquests.

In the thirteenth century Alexander III. of Scotland claimed the Hebrides for the Scottish Crown, which led to trouble with Haco, the Norwegian king. Haco gathered his followers in Arran in 1256, sailed over to Ayrshire and wasted the countryside. His fleet reached Largs, but Alexander met the Norwegians, and discomfited them near Kilbirnie, pursuing them in hot revenge to Largs. Here the elements favoured Alexander: Haco's fleet was scattered by a raging storm; he escaped to Kirkwall, in Orkney, and there, it is alleged, died of a broken heart. This was the beginning of the end of Norse sway in the Hebrides—a dominion extending over centuries. Hakonson, King of Norway, in 1266, ceded the islands to Scotland for the consideration of a payment of 4,000 marks

sterling and an annual tribute of 100 marks. This tribute came to be known as the "Annual of Norway," and was seldom paid.

Norse influence has left many marks on the mainland of Scotland and in the northern Hebrides. It appears in place-names and the physique of the population. It is very marked in Mull, Lewis, and Skye, but not so pronounced in Arran. But, as noted in the previous chapter, two Viking's graves have been unearthed, and there are some place-names of Norse origin. Brodick is "the broad wick," or wide bay, or creek. Sannox is the "sand-vik, or wick." Whiting Bay is not named after the fish which may be angled there, but after the "Ting," or "Thing," a deliberative assembly.

Undoubtedly the most popular historic event in the annals of Arran is its temporary occupancy by Robert the Bruce. It is an oft-told story, but so romantic that it always bears repetition.

Edward I. of England had annexed Scotland, but had not won the hearts of its people. His treatment of Wallace, the national hero, dictated revenge. Bruce, the heir to the Scottish throne, while at Edward's Court, determined to secure his heritage. His determination becoming known

to Edward, he was obliged to retire hastily from the Court. With a few followers, he made his way to Scone, where he was hurriedly crowned. The anger of Edward was terrible, and after some fights and wanderings, Bruce was compelled to take refuge in the little island of Rathlin off the north of Ireland. Among the faithful followers shut up with him in Rathlin were Sir James Douglas and Sir Robert Boyd.

The Douglas is represented as weary of inactivity and urgent to throw off the English yoke. Old Barbour, the poet-historian, makes him thus address the King:

> "I have heard say that in Arrane,
> In a strong castle made of stane,
> An Englishman that with strong band,
> Holds the lordship of that land."

The Englishman was Sir John Hastings, who in 1306 was governor of Brodick Castle.

Douglas and Boyd received Bruce's permission to cross to Arran, and they did so with a small following. They probably landed at Lochranza, and, leaving their galleys there, made their way to a position of advantage near Brodick Castle. Douglas, from the summit of a hill, observed three galleys in the bay. It transpired that these galleys contained cargoes of clothing, arms, and

provisions for the English garrison. Gathering his followers, Douglas made a sudden descent upon the under-warden who was attending to the beaching of the cargoes, killing forty of the escort and capturing the stores. In the meantime, the garrison of the Castle received the alarm and sallied to the rescue, only to be repulsed by Douglas. Such as escaped retired to the Castle, while Douglas and his followers made off to their camp, and, as Barbour declares, "made right merrie" over the good things captured from the English.

Within a few days Bruce, with thirty-three galleys, crossed to Arran. One tradition makes him land on the west of the island and establish himself in what are now called the King's Caves. Scott declares Lochranza to be his landing-place, and this is most likely.

Although under the English yoke, the natives of Arran seem to have welcomed Bruce and given him such aid as they could. They would probably hail with satisfaction the prospect of relief from foreign sway. It is related that Bruce asked a young woman if there were strangers in the island, and this person at once conducted him to Douglas's retreat. However, on the King's arrival Douglas and Boyd were

hunting. The account of the meeting is best told in Barbour's quaint lines:

"The King then blew his horn on high,
And gert his men that were him by
Hold them still, and all privy;
And syne again his horn blew he.
James of Douglas heard him blow,
And at the last alone 'gan know,
And said, 'Soothly yon is the King;
I know long while since his blowing.'
The third time therewithall he blew,
And then Sir Robert Boid it knew;
And said, 'Yon is the King, but dread,
Go we forth till him, better speed.'
Then went they till the King in bye,
And him inclined courteously;
And blithly welcomed them the king,
And was joyful of their meeting."

Bruce's combined forces duly besieged and secured Brodick Castle. Lord Hailes declares that he sent a faithful servant, Cuthbert, across the channel to sound the disposition of vassals in Carrick around his castle at Turnberry, and Bruce is pictured in an old ballad as watching from Brodick for the beacon fire which was to be the signal for him to cross, and assert himself against Edward's rule:

"When day gaed doon ower Goatfell grim,
And darkness mantled a',
A kingly form strode to and fro
On Brodick's castle wa'.

The King's Caves

"And aye he gazed ayont the Firth,
Where blasts were roarin' snell,
And oft he leaned upon his sword,
Sad, muttering to himsel'.

"'In vain, in vain,' at length he cried,
And hung his head in woe,
When streaming far through storm and gloom,
He saw the beacon glow."

The King, having seen the blaze, embarked with his following at King's Cross Point, south of Lamlash, but when he reached Turnberry he found that the fire had not been lit by Cuthbert, and that his cause was in a seemingly hopeless condition. But there was no turning back; the situation was faced with that rare courage which ultimately led to complete victory.

It cannot be said exactly how long Bruce stayed in Arran. The tradition that he occupied the King's Caves for some time may have some foundation in fact, and gives to the caves a romantic interest. The caves include the King's Cave proper, which is about 115 feet long, 44 feet in its greatest width, and 50 in height, and other caves called the King's Stable, the King's Cellar, and the King's Kitchen. The principal cave has some interesting, if crude, sculptures on its walls, mostly indicative of the chase, and a seat cut out of the rock near the

entrance. One tradition has it that it was while sitting on this seat that Bruce learned his lesson of perseverance from the spider; another locates the supposed episode at King's Cross. Tradition also associates this cave with the great Fingal, the hero of Ossian's poems. Fingal was supposed to be of gigantic stature and to have had a son born to him in the cave. Headrick says: "A straight groove is shown, cut on the side of the cave, which is firmly believed to have been the exact length of the child's foot the day after he was born. The groove is more than two feet in length, and, taking the human foot to be one sixth of a man's height, it follows the child must have been more than twelve feet high the day after he was born." The name of Fingal—Fioun the Gael—appears commonly in Arran traditions.

With the accession to the Scottish throne of Robert II., son of Marjory Bruce and Walter, sixth High Steward, Arran became crown property, and the inhabitants received some special privileges for their good faith. The King formed a body-guard, celebrated as the *Brandani*, from men of Arran and Bute. Some Arran families, who held land in the island about this period, and, subsequently, are said to have received titles

AN ARRAN HILLSIDE.

from Bruce. But this seems untrue. The Fullerton family, who still hold a small part of the island, are said to have a charter signed by Robert II. in the second year of his reign. The Hamiltons, who hold by far the larger part of Arran, have been in possession since the beginning of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

THE CIRCUIT OF ARRAN

A CENTURY ago there were no metalled roads in Arran, but now the roads are really good, and the circuit of the island may be accomplished by horse conveyance, cycle or foot with ease and safety. Perhaps the writer is prejudiced in favour of pedestrianism, and his recommendation to tramp round Arran may be taken *cum grano salis;* but he is satisfied that by no other means can the journey be so satisfactorily enjoyed. Let the progress be leisurely, so that points of interest may be studied to advantage, and time be allowed for detours.

Starting, say, from Brodick Hotel and journeying northward, the road skirts the lovely bay. To the left are traces of an old sea beach, now raised beyond the reach of the waves; to the right the sea laps the present shore; in front Brodick Castle is seen stately in its well-wooded policies, and beyond, rise in grim dignity, the serrated granite peaks of Arran—all combining to produce as fair a prospect as one might wish to behold. A half-mile walk brings us to the

ALONG THE SHORE.

The coast line of Arran is greatly varied. In many parts the shore is rocky and dotted with numerous rock-pools.

road leading to Glen Cloy, but we resist the temptation to visit the enchanted place, famed for Bruce's Castle (p. 19) and the Crystal Quarry, where amethysts may be found, but only in reward for a stiff climb. Near Brodick schoolhouse on the right of the road, there is a red sandstone monolith, locally called the Druid's Stone, but whose significance has not been determined. A little farther we come to the String Road from which the paths to Glen Shurig and Glen Rosa strike off. Avoiding "the String" we bear by the main road to the right under arching trees and over the lovely Rosa Burn, perhaps pausing to watch some anglers luring trout, or to be delighted by the graceful movements of red deer in the policies hard by. Progressing, we are soon at the old quay and the entrance to the Castle. An engraved stone in the wall informs us that King Edward and his Consort set foot on Scottish soil in 1901 in the vicinity for the first time after his coronation. Brodick Castle has already entered into our story, but there is yet more to tell about it than space can be found for.

It is said that it occupies the site of a fortlet built by the early islanders. Haco's followers reduced it on the occasion of his historic invasion.

It was rebuilt by James, High Steward of Scotland. During the fight for independence it was held sometimes by the English and sometimes by the Scotch. Bruce, as we have seen, wrested it from the English. Donald Balloch, of Islay, destroyed the castle in 1455. Again rebuilt, it was burned down about 1528 during a feud between the Argyle and McLean clans. James V. is supposed to have rebuilt it, but once more, after his death, it was destroyed by the Earl of Lennox. Built again, it was, in the troubles between Charles and the Parliament, held alternately by the Royal and Covenanting parties. When the King was defeated, the castle was garrisoned by Cromwell, who executed the Duke of Hamilton for favouring the Royalists. Cromwell added a massive tower to the north-east. His soldiers paid disrespectful attentions to the women-folk of the Duke's retainers, who were so enraged that they attacked and slaughtered a foraging party from the garrison. The present castle is almost entirely modern. But what a tale the ground it covers could tell !

The peaks are now lost to view, but the eye is greeted by the splendidly wooded castle policies on the left, a rugged shore and ample seascape to the right, and, looking behind, the Clauchland

Hills are seen across the bay, with humped Dun Dubh at the back of Corrygills, and Dun Fioun, capped with its ancient fort, rising precipitously from the sea. Three miles accomplished, we are at the end of the castle woods and at Merkland Point, the northern extremity of Brodick Bay. The clachan of Merkland is on the left, perched 250 feet above us, but is not seen from the road. A short cist is to be seen on a side track approaching one of the farms. We are walking on a raised sea-beach, and the old cliffs, sometimes rising to a considerable elevation, are on our left. Here and there, as we journey, a wave-worn cave may be detected. On the shore, which we are still skirting, we observe numerous trap dykes, of volcanic origin, intersecting the much-faulted and false-bedded New Red Sandstone. We also notice thousands of boulders of various sizes, generally of granite, strewn in confusion on the shore. Nearing Corrie, even larger boulders are found, and there is a huge perched block on the edge of the old cliff, called *Clach Mhor*—the Great Stone. This is said to weigh about 600 tons. Beyond Corrie, on the way to Sannox, we find more big blocks, a split boulder on the shore called *Clach an Fion*, the Hero's Stone; a little farther, on the left, *Clach a Chait*, the Cat

Stone; and one and a half miles north of Corrie, on the shore, the Rocking Stone, which, by the way, does not rock. These blocks, and the thousands of smaller boulders, are vestiges of glacial times; they were carried from the hills by ice-flows and deposited far away from their source.

Corrie, six miles from Brodick, is a charmingly picturesque village, beloved of artists and much frequented by visitors in the summer season. Here are old limestone workings where the fossil hunter may search with effect. Sannox is a little over a mile beyond Corrie, and here the road leaves the shore and rises for some four miles, leading us through grand moorland country, and then descends through Glen Chalmadale to romantic Lochranza, immortalized by Scott in his "Lord of the Isles":

> "The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
> Ben-Ghoil, 'The Mountain of the Wind,'
> Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
> And bade Lochranza smile."

On the margin of this loch, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, founded and endowed a chapel, the site of which can now be barely traced. Scott, urged by poetic imagination, raised this to the dignity of a convent, in which he pictures the

AN ARRAN CROFT

The whitewashed cottages of the crofters are picturesque features of an Arran landscape

hapless Maid of Lorn and the lonely Isabel. The meeting of Bruce and his sister on the King's arrival in Arran, when he had an outlaw's life, is thus described:

"They met like friends, who part in pain,
And meet in doubtful hope again.
And when subdued that fitful swell,
The Bruce survey'd the humble cell;—
'And this is thine, poor Isabel!—
That pallet-couch and naked wall,
For room of state, and bed of pall;
For costly robes and jewels rare,
A string of beads and zone of hair;
And for the trumpet's sprightly call
To sport or banquet, grove or ball,
The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
'Twixt hours of penitence and prayer!'"

Lochranza, with its blue water and rough hillsides, its ruined castle and neat cottages, approached from Glen Chalmadale, is as bonnie a picture as one might find anywhere in Scotland, and it is, naturally, a favourite subject for the artist. Little is known of the old castle. 'Tis said that it was built by a Stewart king for a hunting seat, and this is not improbable. Arran was a favourite hunting ground with several kings. Fordun, writing about 1400, speaks of the castle as one of the two royal castles in Arran. The tourist may well stay a few days at this

interesting resort in order to explore the neighbouring hills and glens. He will be repaid if he crosses the loch to Newton and makes his way by the Cock of Arran along the shore as far as the Fallen Rocks, a mass of sandstone debris resultant upon a landslide from the cliff. By doing this a part of the coast-line, avoided by the main road, will be seen to advantage. Beyond the Fallen Rocks is the mouth of North Glen Sannox, and the return to Lochranza may be made up the glen until the road is reached.

Continuing the circuit, the road from Lochranza onwards skirts the sea for many miles, and the pedestrian has a good view of the Kintyre coast across the Kilbrannan Sound. Observing the cliffs on his left he will see they are composed of the genuine highland schists, much metamorphosed, folded and twisted rocks, and the oldest formations to be seen in the island. The cliffs from Lochranza to Catacol, about two miles, are particularly fine, crowned as they are with natural copsewood, and adorned from top to bottom with ferns and flowers. At Catacol some native may point out the site known as *Ar Fhioun*, Fingal's Slaughter. Here there used to be a round cairn, said to have been raised in memory of the invasion, defeat and death of the

Swedish King, Manos. The story goes that the invading Manos was met and defeated by Fingal, but when he promised to return to Sweden and cease his depredations his conqueror set him free. The promise, however, was not kept, for Manos had scarcely left Arran when his men induced him to return and fight again. The consequences were disastrous, the ever victorious Fingal meeting him and putting him to death. Thus runs the rythmic chronicle :

> " As the decayed grove of the mountain
> Sinks under the rapid sweep of the whirlwind,
> So were the mighty overturned
> As they fell under our feet in battle.
> Manos, leader of the host, has fallen,
> Like a fiery meteor in the forth of currents.
> Grievous was the cry of his heroes,
> When their spreading voice was heard around.
> Except a man who sought his place,
> Or who took protection under our shield,
> None of the followers of Lochlin's king
> Returned to his own land."

The material of the cairn was removed by the islanders a goodly number of years ago, and used for road metal.

Glen Catacol is worth visiting, and the traveller who makes his way by the burn up into the hills will realize what it means to walk away from the beaten track ; but the toil involved is

amply repaid by a glimpse of genuine highland scenery.

Following the main road from Catacol, we pass much of scenic interest. The road at one part is a switchback, elsewhere it is comparatively level, being made on the surface of an ancient sea-beach. The clachans of Lennymore, Auchamore, and Penrioc are on the brow of the brae, some 200 feet up, and scarcely visible from the road. On the beach, below Lennymore, are some rugged masses of twisted schists, very picturesque. Pirnmill, six miles from Lochranza, is soon reached, and a few days spent there can be well filled. Corrie an Lachan, a little sheet of water over 1,000 feet above sea-level, should be visited. Situated in a corrie, or scooped out hollow, amidst superb mountain scenery, wild in the extreme, but yet so sheltered that the surface of the loch is scarcely rippled in the wildest gale, Corrie an Lachan is declared to be the finest inland loch in Arran. Some of the western granite heights may be approached from Pirnmill. Meall Biorach—the Hill of the Heifer—1,800 feet; Beinn Bhreac—the Dappled Hill—2,333 feet; and Beinn Bharrain, 2,345 feet, may be negotiated in one journey, and Loch Tanna, the largest inland loch in Arran, placed at an elevation of 1,065 feet,

GLEN SANNOX FROM THE MOUTH OF THE SANNOX BURN

Glen Sannox is considered to be the finest glen in Arran and is often compared with famous Glencoe.

may be deemed worthy of the strenuous tramp over hill, moor and bog. If one desires to carry home an impression of the beauty of an Arran burn, let the course of the Altgoblach Burn be traced from its mouth at Pirnmill to its source on the slopes of Beinn Bharrain, nearly 2,000 feet above the sea. Its boulder-bestrewn bed, its cascades and waterfalls, one of them having a drop of 90 feet, its whirlpools and eddies, its wooded slopes, verdure-clad banks and perpendicular cliffs are so beautiful as to beggar description. This burn is glorious at any season, but to see it in spate after heavy rains is an inspiration.

From Pirnmill to the little whitewashed clachan of Whitefarland is a mile walk. This settlement is on the land of the Fullerton family, and is conspicuous for the number of exotic plants, imported from the tropics, which grow there. The southerner usually regards the highlands as wind-swept and bare, but he is not a little surprised when he beholds such sequestered nooks as Whitefarland, and realizes what vegetation may be made to flourish there.

The main road from Whitefarland to Imachar rises over the schistose cliffs, but the pedestrian is well advised to travel by the shore and see the magnificent cliffs to advantage. Such cliffs they

are—ivy-grown, fern-clad, bird-haunted; and such a shore—replete with objects of natural interest, much beloved by botanist and naturalist.

Beyond Imachar, perched on the hillside nearly 300 feet up, is the old village of Ballikine, where the run-rig system of cultivation is still followed. The land is held in common, the arable being divided into equal lots, called rigs, and these are allotted annually so that every tenant may have an equal share of good and bad ground.

Two miles from Ballikine we are at Dougarie, where the Marquis of Graham has a handsome shooting lodge. Here we are on the verge of the highland boundary and at the foot of Glen Iorsa, the longest glen in Arran.

We are now entering a district where memorials of prehistoric times are numerous. Cairns, standing stones, and stone circles are to be found from Auchencar to Kilpatrick. They are most numerous about Machrie and Tormore. The imaginative tourist will find them both impressive and suggestive, and they have given rise to many native superstitions. Visitors desiring to locate them will find them marked on the inch-to-a-mile survey map of the island.

At Machrie the high road leaves the shore

and continues inland, about a mile from the Sound, for nearly three miles, eventually dipping down to the beach at Blackwater Foot. From Blackwater Foot visits may be paid to the Doon fort and the King's Caves, to which references have already been made. Or a side road on the left, over a mile before Blackwater Foot, leading over the Blackwater to Shiskin, may be taken. At Shiskin the String Road is joined, and this may be followed to Blackwater Foot.

Near Shiskin is the old clachan churchyard, in which until 1889 the traditional stone of St. Molios used to stand. In that year the relic was removed from its clachan site and built into the wall of the present chapel at Shisken. Although it may be bold to gainsay the native notion that this statue represents Arran's patron saint, there can be no doubt that it really represents a thirteenth-century ecclesiastic. The figured vestments all combine to indicate such a date. St. Molios flourished in the seventh century.

The main road round the island now skirts the Sound and is placed above the cliffs at a considerable elevation. From it magnificent views are to be had of the Kintyre coast. We see Campbeltown, sheltered by Davaar, and Spoon

Island, or Sanda, at the south of the Mull. Nearly two miles from Brown Head the road inclines inland, but generally admits of a sea view. Corriecravie, sought after by golfers, is a pretty settlement and between this clachan and Sliddery, a short distance from the shore side of the road, is the ancient fort known as Tor Castle, the subject of many traditions. From Sliddery the road winds picturesquely across Sliddery Water, and a couple of miles' walking brings us to Lag, the most sequestered and by far the prettiest Arran village. In this sleepy hollow there is warmth and shelter when all around is swept by the snell blast. The Kilmory burn is a charming stream making its tortuous course from the hills, through Lag to the sea at Torlin Waterfoot. At Torlin is the cairn concerning which the story related on page 15 is told. Lag is a place wherein to rest and bask, or while away a day in luring trout.

Rising out of Lag, the road runs at a considerable elevation and about three quarters of a mile from the shore, through Kilbride Bennan, Shannochie and West Bennan, where the smithy is said to be the highest placed house in Arran. At East Bennan the pedestrian may well visit an easily found chambered cairn, and from thence

IN NORTH GLEN SANNOX

make by an old smugglers' path over Bennan Head to the sea. Before descending, the highest point of the headland should be ascended and advantage be taken of an incomparable view to the south, west and east.

Arrived at the shore, after a not too comfortable descent of nearly 400 feet, the scenery of this magnificent headland is observed in all its dignity. The rugged trappean rocks, in whose clefts nest the rock-dove, the jackdaw and the house-martin, present a truly noble front. Here also is the Black or Monster Cave, a recess in the hard trap rock 80 feet high, 40 feet wide and 100 feet deep, worn out by the impact of the waves. This is the largest cave in Arran, and it is reported that flint weapons were once found in it, indicating its occupancy by prehistoric man.

From the Black Cave, in situation so romantic, and in the absence of a better path, one must needs scramble over the Struey Rocks for half a mile or so, stepping warily lest a slip lead to a broken leg or sprained ankle. This is a region of much rugged grandeur and the habitat of much wild life. The cliffs are the home of several rare plants, the carline thistle, the wood vetch, black horehound and fleabane—all rarities in

the Clyde area. As one leaves the Struey Rocks and finds a more comfortable path round the headland, one has time to observe a striking peculiarity of this southern shore. Great and long trap dykes extend from the cliffs across the foreshore into the sea, many in number, some intersecting each other, and all greatly worn by ages of weathering. These dykes are very numerous on the southern shore, but are to be seen in other localities in the island. They indicate a remote period of great volcanic activity, when the land surface was broken and fissured by subterranean forces and great volumes of heated lava forced themselves through the fissures to the surface. The volcanic matter cooled and hardened in the fissures, forming these remarkable dykes, which now appear above the surface owing to the denudation of the strata in which they were moulded.

Walking along this interesting shore, we have a good view of Pladda Island, and, if the atmosphere is clear, of Ailsa Craig, dubbed "Paddy's Milestone," standing immense and solitary in the channel. Arrived at Kildonan, the principal feature of interest is Kildonan Castle, an old peel situated on a precipitous cliff, and fast falling into complete decay.

HOLY ISLAND FROM LAMLASH BAY—EARLY MORNING—

St. Mobis, the patron saint of Arran, used a cave in this island as a place of retirement.

Cave at Dippen

Like others of its kind, this small castle consisted of a quadrangular tower of four stories. It seems to have played no very conspicuous part in history. Built, as it is alleged, by Alexander II., it is supposed to have formed one of a line of fortified towers extending from the mouth of the Clyde to Dunbarton. It was probably used as a watch-tower in a time when invasion was common.

The road on which we now find ourselves inclines upward and soon joins the main road which we left at East Bennan. By making our detour we have missed some parts of a track which are wooded and rendered melodious by the music of burns, but we have been compensated by the grandeur and wonders of the headland and shore. Passing on to the clachan of Dippen, we may be tempted to seek a cave in the cliff beneath the modern shooting lodge. M'Arthur declares that the natives used to believe that this cave had submarine connection with the Ayrshire coast, and told the old story of the piper and his dog in association with it; declaring that the muffled notes of the pibroch might be still heard at night rising and falling on the passing breeze.

Descending the hill from Dippen, through

Largybeg, Largymenoch and Largymore, we get a good view of the Holy Island, with Whiting Bay in the foreground. The latter village, very popular with visitors, is soon entered, and before going any further along the road we visit Glen-easdale, not only to be awed by its magnificent waterfall and delighted with its luxuriant beauty, but also to see the prehistoric fort, which we must look for carefully, as it is not easily seen on account of trees. From Whiting Bay we also visit King's Cross Point, in order to see the fort there and the remains of the Viking's Grave (page 21).

At King's Cross, or perhaps better at the more popular resort, Lamlash, we may obtain a boat in which to cross to the Holy Island, which must certainly be visited. Here, on the east of the island, and about half a mile north of the southern lighthouse, is the cave which St. Molios, the patron saint of Arran, used as a place of retirement. This has recently been carefully explored under the direction of Mr. J. A. Balfour and the complete cell laid bare. There is a paved portion in which is set a large stone, now but little raised above the pavement. The stone was probably the Saint's altar; the remainder of the cave would be his living room, for there was discovered a

fireplace and a mass of ashes in which shells of oysters and limpets were found. Judging from the discovered broken bones of domesticated animals, the saint evidently regaled himself on their flesh. Pilgrims must have visited this venerable place in considerable numbers; they have left traces in the form of scores of crosses carved in the rock. In this cave we behold the habitation of a very early Celtic saint, who settled there about A.D. 680, and probably made missionary journeys from thence. Near by is St. Molios's Well and two stones, one called the Judgment Stone and the other St. Molios's Table.

About a mile northwards from this cell is the site of a monastery, said to have been erected by Reginald MacSomerled, King of the Isles, in the thirteenth century. Dean Monro mentioned in 1594 that the monastery was "decayit," but Arranites made it their principal burying-ground until 1790. It seems that a remarkable cross was removed from this site about fifty years ago and placed in the kirkyard of the old chapel of Kilbride at Lamlash. It bears a representation of the body of Christ with outstretched arms, set in a chalice from whence is indicated a stream of blood flowing for the benefit of a suppliant figure at the base of the cross.

Headrick vented satire upon St. Molios which we deem hardly justified. He wrote, in 1807: "This saint, along with many others . . . acquired his celebrity, when dirt, nastiness, and absurdity, formed the most prominent features of sanctity. . . . He chose a residence where the channel is narrowest, and most easily accessible from Arran, and within the bay, where vessels from all quarters would find safety. His object must have been, not to retire from the world, but to draw the world after him; and I doubt not but in this cave he displayed more pride, vanity, and pomposity, than Diogenes in his tub, or Bonaparte while seating himself upon a throne." This is expressive language, but strongly tinctured with the *odium theologicum.*

The village of Lamlash is deservedly popular. It skirts a fine bay, naturally sheltered by the Holy Isle, and the surrounding country is varied and charming. Near by is the ruined kirk or chapel of Kilbride, of which we have record as early as 1357.

Fortunate, indeed, is the traveller if he conclude his tour round the island with the walk from Lamlash to Brodick towards sunset after a fine day. The road is steep until an elevation of nearly 400 feet is reached, and just here, on the

right, is an ancient stone circle surrounding a short cist. But the charm of the walk is scenic, not archæological. Right across a wooded valley the majestic peaks of Arran are seen in all their grandeur, black and serrated, against the sunset sky. Goatfell looks like a noble volcanic cone, and it may happen that the ruddy glow illuminating the clouds will suggest an eruption. Whatever the atmospheric effects may chance to be, the view can hardly be paralleled. At the solemn evening hour the majesty of the panorama possesses the soul, inducing sentiments and thoughts too deep for words; and the tired traveller retires to his well-earned rest in Brodick with a sense of the Eternal, and the enjoyment of a Great Peace.

CHAPTER V

THE ARRAN HILLS AND GLENS

Arran has many charms, and not the least among them are its hills and glens. The lover of nature is not satisfied with admiring them at a distance; he is irresistibly drawn to scramble up the peaks and tramp the courses of the valleys. In doing this he leaves the hard-metalled roads and experiences the joy of less frequented and more varied tracks, or, mayhap, making a course where no track is.

It is in the northern or highland half of Arran that the grandest scenery is to be found. There are the great peaks and the noblest glens. This, however, is not to imply that the lowlands to the south are tame. Although geologically they are lowlands, they are not flat, but are studded with heights, some of which attain the dignity of mountains. The streams there run bonnie courses, and the glens through which they make their way to the sea, although not formed on so grand a scale as in the north, have many beauties. Glen Cloy, which is entered at Brodick, and about two miles upwards branches into Glen Ormidale and

Glen Dubh, is a fine example of lowland Arran scenery; and the same may be said of the Monamore Glen, entered at Lamlash, and Gleneasdale, approached from Whiting Bay. And the smaller glens, numerous in all parts of the island, are all places of beauty, even if they are so small as not to be named or outlined in the smaller maps which are in circulation.

To see the best of the Arran highlands one must traverse at least two of its great glens, and climb more than one peak. Glen Iorsa is the longest glen, and perhaps the best watered, but from the scenic standpoint it is inferior to Glens Rosa and Sannox. The walk along Rosa, over the Saddle and down Sannox, or *vice versa*, is the grandest in Arran, and can hardly be excelled for noble scenery anywhere.

Glen Rosa, entered by a road leading off the "String" near the Established Church at Brodick, as the map shows, is nearly five miles long from foot to head, but few people will tramp it within a couple of hours. The miles are long ones on account of the constantly rising ground and the difficulties of its surface. The glen is watered by the Rosa Burn and its tributaries, and the main course of this stream is followed up to its source on the slopes of the Saddle. For a couple of

miles the track followed by the pedestrian is fairly good, and he has ample opportunity of looking about him in order to enjoy the views as he proceeds; but higher up the glen the track becomes indistinct, and the ground rough and boggy, so that steps have to be watched lest a fall or a wetting be suffered. Occasions of breathlessness may supply opportunities for pauses in the walk, and these may be used in looking about.

This glen, in common with the others, furnishes many evidences of past glacial action. Boulders weighing from a few pounds to many tons are scattered in reckless profusion, moraines are observable, and in places the crystal waters of the Rosa have cut through heaps of glacial deposits, which in consequence may be seen in fine sections. The bed of the ever-falling, ever-winding stream is bestrewn with granite boulders and detritus, and its water, uncontaminated at any point, is limpid in a high degree.

Two miles up the glen the Rosa is joined by the Garbh Allt Burn, which tumbles over a perfect confusion of big boulders, descending noisily at a quick angle, and making a fine picture. A mile further we are in majestic surroundings; the ridge of Beinn a' Chliabhain stands to our left, and across the glen, to the right, Goatfell points

GLEN ROSA AND CIR MHOR

The precipitous nature of Cir Mhor becomes apparent as one makes one's way to the head of Glen Rosa

to the sky; ahead is Cir Mhor and the ridge leading from the Saddle to Goatfell and other peaks.

The Saddle is three stiff miles from the Garbh Allt, and in the last mile we have risen rapidly from a height of 600 feet above sea-level to about 1,700 feet. So soon as the head rises above the ridge a superb surprise view is seen: Glen Sannox is stretched before us, flanked by mountains; its stream from this elevation appears like a white meandering streak, and beyond is the blue of the Sound of Bute, backed by the island from which it has its name. Above, to the left, the towering cliffs of Cir Mhor frown upon us, and on the other band a knife-edge ridge rises to North Goatfell. The rise to the Saddle from Rosa is easy, compared with the precipitous descent into Glen Sannox: this has to be negotiated with care; indeed, visitors considered it impassable until half a century ago, when two hardy ladies descended in safety. Some of the commoner Alpine plants grow in profusion in the neighbourhood of the Saddle; the Alpine ladies' mantle, the dwarf juniper, the dwarf willow, and the rose-root stonecrop.

It takes some time to make the descent into Glen Sannox, and when it is accomplished the track is discovered to be rougher and wetter than

it seemed from above. It provides full use for the "heather" step, and if the pedestrian arrives at Sannox village with dry feet he must have been exceedingly well shod. But the labour involved is forgotten in the grandeur of Arran's finest glen.

Goatfell (2,866 feet), being the highest peak in Arran, it is considered "the thing" to climb it. Yet it is attempted by only a small proportion of the summer visitors, and by still fewer of the islanders. The ascent is usually made from Brodick by a track, well-defined, passing through the castle policies, and following the course of the Cnocan Burn. This path passes over strata of carboniferous and old red sandstone ages, crosses a band of the old highland schists, and touches the granite core of Arran at an elevation of about 1,000 feet. It leads at an easy angle to Meall Breac, a spur of Goatfell, where climbing becomes more toilsome. But Goatfell is really an easy climb on the whole; it is only the last hundred feet or so that is hard work. Towards the summit, if the climb be in August, plenty of bilberries may be picked and used to quench thirst, and the botanist will observe the less common fruits of the crowberry and cowberry.

Having climbed Goatfell, we are in a position to appreciate the nature of the Arran peaks. They

are not rounded turf-clad rocks, but masses of granite masonry slowly disintegrating. On various parts there are "cyclopæan walls," naturally placed jointed masses, so weathered along their joint planes as to appear like the work of ancient builders of giant strength. All around are screes of granite debris, the wastage of the mountains, demonstrating their perishable nature and exploding the poetic fancy of "eternal" hills. Time was when these hills were not, and the time will be when they will have disappeared.

The view from Goatfell, granted a clear atmosphere, and that clouds do not descend upon us, is exceedingly fine and far-reaching. The great "Bens" of the mainland are seen to the north; we look right over Kintrye to the islands of Islay and Jura; to the south Ireland appears on the horizon, and Ailsa Craig stands out distinctly; while Arran itself lies mapped out below. And these are but a few of the features of the view.

Rather than return by the ordinary path, it is better to follow the ridge to North Goatfell, in the course of which there is some good climbing to be done, and from North Goatfell to take the ridge bordering Glen Sannox. This branches eastwards to Am Binnein (2,172 feet), and north-eastwards to Cioch-na-h-Oighe, "The Maiden's

Pap" (2,166 feet). From Am Binnein a descent may be made into the lovely glen watered by the Corrie Burn, which can be followed to the coast road near Corrie. Perhaps the descent over Cioch-na-h-Oighe into Sannox is the more interesting course to take.

For mountaineering of a more pronounced type, the climber is counselled to attack Beinn Nuis, "the hill of the fawns" (2,597 feet). This is approached from Glen Rosa by way of the Garbh Allt Burn, and is a fairly easy climb. From Beinn Nuis a rough ridge leads to Beinn Tarsuinn, "the cross hill" (2,706 feet). The view from this eminence is even finer than that from Goatfell. The A'Chir ridge, literally, "the comb" (2,335 feet), runs from Beinn Tarsuinn to precipitous Cir Mhor, "the great crest" (2,618 feet). The A'Chir is the roughest ridge in the range and gives splendid climbing opportunities; but if the novice at climbing is troubled with "nerves," he had better follow a track below the rough ridge, and thus reach Cir Mhor by an easier way. Cir Mhor is situated at the head of Arran's three greatest glens: Rosa, Iorsa and Sannox, and the view from it is superb. But perhaps the finest view is to be had from Caisteal Abhail, "the forked castle" (2,735 feet), which should be

attacked after Cir Mhor. Continuing north-westwards from Caisteal Abhail, a ridge or spur descends into Glen Ranza. In descending Loch-na-Davie, "the loch of the two rivers," which is easily located, should be made the first objective. The Iorsa and Ranza streams issue from this loch to flow in opposite directions. Glen Ranza is narrow, and its turbulent stream passes through an abysmal chasm. Following along the glen, the traveller ultimately reaches Lochranza, where he will be glad to rest after his strenuous efforts.

Instead of heading for Lochranza, one may cross from Caisteal Abhail to Ceum na Cailliche, "the old woman's or witch's step," and from thence over Suidhe Fheargus, "the seat of Fergus" (1,758 feet), into north Glen Sannox. Suidhe Fheargus is said to be a point from which Fergus (p. 24) surveyed his possessions. An easier day's climbing is secured by ascending Beinn Nuis, following on to Beinn Tarsuinn, passing over Bealach an Fhir Bhogha, "the archer's pass," to Beinn a' Chliabhain, "the hill of the little cradle" (2,217 feet), which points southwards, and descending into Glen Rosa. Beinn a' Chliabhain is a splendid point from which to view the neighbouring peaks and ridges, and one can look across Glen Rosa to Goatfell and realize the depth

of the glen as from no other point. Indeed, Rosa is seen to the best advantage from this eminence.

The best days on which to traverse Arran's glens and mountains are when a moderate breeze blows from the north-west and the sun shines after some days of rain. Then the peaks and ridges stand out sharply in a scintillating atmosphere, and the glens are seen in every detail. But this is seeing Arran in a summer mood; he alone knows the island who tramps it in all weathers and in all seasons. Let Goatfell be climbed when snow glistens on its ridges, and a snell blast from the north is blowing; traverse Rosa and Sannox during a fierce south-wester, soaked to the skin by torrential rains, and when the tracks are all running burns, and each footfall is accompanied with a splash. Ascend the hills when the mists are low upon them, and every step has to be calculated and made sure; when, indeed, it is easy to be lost, and one realizes what it means to be alone. It is in doing such things that one gets to appreciate the soul of a country, and to understand its influence in the making of the soul of a people. And it is the men and women who have the grit to do these things who are the backbone of our nation.

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